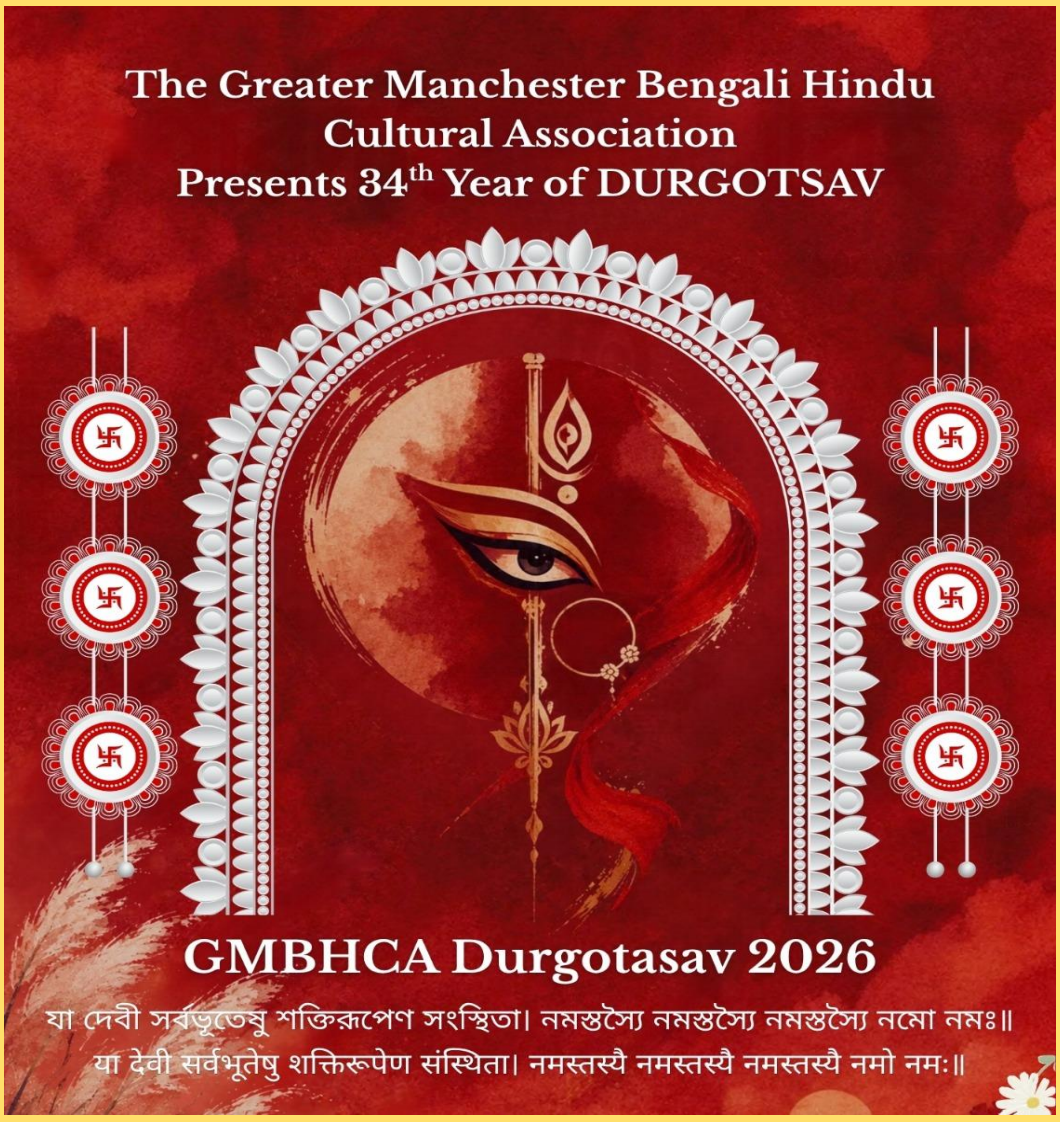
GMBHCA Durgotsav 2026

সার্বজনীন দুর্গোৎসব ২০২৬

আদি ম্যানচেস্টার দুর্গাপূজা Adi Manchester Durga Puja

সম্প্রীতি, সংস্কৃতি ও আনন্দের মিলনমেলা – শারদ আনন্দে মিলিত হোক সকলের প্রাণ

A Celebration of Harmony, Culture and Joy,
May Every Heart Unite in the Joy of Durga Puja.



या देवी सर्वभूतेषु शक्तिरूपेण संस्थिता। नमस्तस्यै नमस्तस्यै नमस्तस्यै नमो नमः॥

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Durgotsav Venue: Gandhi Hall
4, Brunswick Road, Withington,
Manchester– M20 4QB

www.manchesterdurgapuja.co.uk
Registered Charity No: 1068094

ABOUT US

Rehab Associates Ltd is a therapist-run organisation delivering gold-standard rehabilitation for individuals with neurological, complex, and catastrophic injuries. Our clinicians are leaders in their fields, providing rigorous assessment, personalised treatment, and measurable functional outcomes.

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THE GREATER MANCHESTER BENGALI HINDU CULTURAL ASSOCIATION
5 Prestwich Hills, Prestwich, Manchester M25 9PY
DURGA PUJA 2026-2027 / Other programme details
VENUE : Gandhi Hall, Brunswick Road, Withington, Manchester M20 4QB
Priests: Mr Sankar Bhattacharjee, Mrs Iti Bhattacharjee and Shastri Shree Krishan Joshi

The Greater Manchester Bengali Hindu Cultural Association (GMBHCA)

Events Calendar 2026-2027

Priests: Mr Sankar Bhattacharjee, Mrs Iti Bhattacharjee , Shastri Shree Krishan Joshi
Assistant Priest: Debanik Banerjee

আদি ম্যানচেস্টার পূজা

Saturday Oct 10 — **MAHALAYA**
Mahalaya Celebration, Cultural Programme & Dinner
04:00 PM to 10:00 PM

Friday Oct 16 — **SRI DURGA SHASHTHI**
Kalparambha, Bodhan, Amantran, Adhibas, Sandhyarati, Pushpanjali,Shanti jol, and prasad bitaran
04:00 PM to 10:00 PM

Saturday Oct 17 — **MAHASAPTAMI**
Nabapatrikar prabesh and sthapan, Mahasnan,Debi puja, Arati, Pushpanjali and prasad bitaran
10:00 AM to 02:00 PM
06:00 PM to 10:00 PM
Debi Puja, Sandhyarati, Pushpanjali, Shanti jol, prosad bitaran

Sunday Oct 18 — **MAHASHTAMI**
Debi Puja, Mahasnan, Akhondo Chandipath
Sandhyarati, Pushpanjali, Shanti jol and prasad bitaran
03:00 PM to 10:00 PM
SANDHI PUJA

Monday Oct 19 — **MAHANABAMI**
Debi puja, Mahasnan, Balidaan, Arati, Pushpanjali, Shanti jol and Prasad
11:00 AM to 02:00 PM
06:00 PM to 10:00 PM
Kumari Puja, Debi puja, Homa, Sandhyarati, Pushpanjali, Shanti jol and prasad bitaran

Tuesday Oct 20 — **BIJOYA DASHAMI**
Debi Puja, Bhog nibedan, Arati, Pushpanjali, Shanti jol, Thakur Bisarjan, Aparajita Puja, Mayer Boron, Sindoor Utsav, Prasad Bitaran
12:01 PM to 10:00 PM

CONTACT
contact@manchesterdurgapuja.co.uk
facebook.com/GMBHCA
@the_gmbhca

Sunday Oct 25 — **KOJAGARI LAKSHMI PUJA**
Debi Puja, Sandhyarati, Pushpanjali, Brata Katha and Prasad bitaran
04:00 PM to 10:00 PM

Sunday Nov 08 — **SRI SRI KALI PUJA**
Debi Puja, Chandipath, Balidan, Homa, Sandhyarati, Pushpanjali and Prasad bitaran
04:00 PM to 10:00 PM

Sunday Nov 15 — **BIJOYA SAMMILANI**
Cultural Function
03:00 PM to 10:00 PM

Thursday Feb 11 — **SRI SRI SARASWATI PUJA**
Debi Puja, Arati, Pushpanjali and Prasad bitaran
Children's Cultural Programme
03:00 PM to 10:00 PM

Saturday Apr 17 — **NABABARSHO UTSAB**
Cultural Function
03:00 PM to 10:00 PM

Please donate Generously to support our events

DONATION ACCOUNT DETAILS:

Account Name : Greater Manchester Cultural,
Sort Code : 01-02-69
Account No : 1322 4700,

Please mention Full Name as reference

Annual Membership fees :
- Family Membership: £121 (2 Adult + 2 Children)
- Individual Membership: £51
- Student Membership: £25 (Valid Id)

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THE GREATER MANCHESTER BENGALI HINDU CULTURAL ASSOCIATION

Dear friends,

The members of the Executive Committee of the Greater Manchester Bengali Hindu Cultural Association (GMBHCA) inviting you with your family & friends to participate in our celebration of the auspicious occasion of Durga Puja 2026 at Gandhi Hall, 4, Brunswick Road, Withington, Manchester– M20 4QB. Like the previous 33 years, we count on your active support and full participation to make this seasonal festivals a grand success.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Bharati Kar
General Secretary, GMBHCA

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS / LEADS

Patron	Dr S. N. Laha
Chairman	Prof. Sandip Mitra
General Secretary	Dr Bharati Kar
Asst. General Secretary	Mr Alok Bhattacharjee
Treasurer / Digitisation Lead	Mr Chandrangshu Nandy
Asst. Treasurer	Mrs Maushami Chatterjee
Brochure Secretary	Mr Subrata Pal
Asst. Brochure Secretary	Mr Abhishek Chatterjee
Entertainment Secretary	Mrs Soma Ghosh Chakraborty
Asst. Entertainment Secretary	Mrs Moumita Dutta
Social Secretary	Dr Joydeep Mookerjee
Membership & Gift aid Officer	Mr Sourav Dey
Media & Promotions Officer	Mr Abhishek Bhol
EC Member	Mr Tapas Dasgupta
EC Member	Mrs Shuma Pal
EC Member	Mr Parag Dutta
NON EC MEMBER	
Mr Arunava Ghosh	Website designer / Developer

GMBHCA Children and Vulnerable Adults Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

Dr. Nabanita Ghosh Email: Nabanitaghosh2@gmail.com Ph: +44 7788 768916

Dr. Debika Banerjee Email: Drdebika@yahoo.com Ph: +44 7770 963673

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES of GMBHCA

Dr Rekha Gupta (Hale) Mrs Sumitra Biswas (Bramhall) Mrs Nabanita Ghosh (Didsbury) Mrs Debasree Mitra (Sale) Mrs Ananya Banerjee (Altrincham) Mrs Anushree Das (Timperley) Mrs Krishnakali Das (Rochdale) Mrs Sujata Ghosh Dutta (Sale) Mrs Anjira Nandy (Altrincham) Mrs Ushashi Coomer (Chorley) Mrs Anney Menon (Heaton Mersey)

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK

BY

CHAIRMAN: PROF. SANDIP MITRA

Manchester, October 2026

A very warm welcome to you all.

On behalf of the GMBHCA family, it is my great joy to welcome you to GMBHCA Durga Pujo, 2026. Since 1993, our Pujo has welcomed Maa Durga to this city for thirty-four years, making it Manchester's longest-running Durga Pujo. What began with a handful of families has grown into a celebration that unites us all in devotion, culture and community spirit.

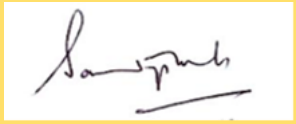
Durga Pujo, now recognised on UNESCO's List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, is celebrated by Bengalis across the world. For a few precious days, a corner of this city becomes a corner of Little Bengal.

Our Pujo is built entirely by the dedication of our volunteers and sub-committee members, who give their evenings, weekends and boundless energy. To each of you, my heartfelt thanks. I am equally grateful to our members and donors, whose generosity sustains the Pujo each year, and to our sponsors for their unwavering support.

Our Pujo is our shared heritage and the values we hope to pass on to the next generation: respect, kindness, selflessness and togetherness. As Swami Vivekananda said in 1893: "Help and not Fight... Harmony and Peace and not Dissension." May that spirit guide our celebrations. If you are not yet a member, I warmly invite you to join GMBHCA and help our community grow stronger still. Please use iKaku to follow us and guide you.

Please Immerse yourselves in the festivities of the dhak, aarti, bhog, music and friendship. When the Pujo season comes to a close, we dont stop. Join us on the 6th dec 2026, 1pm at the Whitworth Art Gallery, for Routes to Roots event : an inspiring afternoon of Remarkable stories and Powerful conversations, celebrating the journeys that shape us. Whether you're a Dr. Rangan fan, a proud parent, a student finding your path or simply curious, this is an afternoon that will leave you inspired.

May the blessings of Maa Durga be with you and your loved ones. Shubho Sharodiya!
With warm regards,



Sandip Mitra (Chairperson), Bharati Kar (General Secretary), Alok Bhattacharjee (Asst. General Secretary), Dr S. N. Laha (Patron), Executive Committee members: - Chandrangshu Nandy, Moushami Chatterjee, Subrata Pal, Abhishek Chatterjee, Joydeep Mookerjee, Soma Ghosh, Moumita Dutta, Tapas Dasgupta, Shuma Pal, Sourav Dey, Abhishek Bhol & Parag Dutta.

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List of Puja days sponsors 2026 / 27

Mahalaya (10th OCTOBER' 2026)

GMBHCA

Maha SHASHTHI (16th OCTOBER' 2026)

GMBHCA

MAHA SAPTAMI (17th OCTOBER' 2026)

Moumita & Ipsit, Anjira & Chandrangshu, Misti & Sirshendu,
Suparna & Anindya, Debika & Samik, Susmita & Arindam,
Nabanita & Sujit, Sharmila & Jeffri, Montila & Sudip,
Suparna & Soumit, Ahana & Sourav, Debasree & Sandip

MAHA ASHTAMI & SANDHI PUJA (18th OCTOBER' 2026)

Bhavana, Tuneer & Trishik Ghosh
Sanchari, Satyaki, Samya & Sarthak Banerjee
Satabdi, Sabyasachi, Reyansh & Sreyansh Dutta
Adwitee, Aniruddh & Anija Raychoudhuri
Debalina Chakraborty, Gourav & Dhruvika Sarkar
Dr. Somnath, Ushashi, Dr. Soham, Snigdha &
Dr. Sreya Coomer
Tannishtha, Anirvan, Sujatha & Vijita Chakraborty

MAHA NABAMI (19th OCTOBER' 2026)

Pankaj and friends

BIJOYA DASHAMI (20th OCTOBER' 2026)

GMBHCA / Sponsorship Welcome

Lakshmi Puja (25th OCTOBER' 2026)

Dr S N Laha & Mrs. Sabita Laha.

Kali Puja (08th November' 2026)

Dr Sutapa Mookerjee Dr Joydeep Mookerjee
Dr Souradip Mookerjee Miss Saloni Mookerjee Miss
Sohana Mookerjee

Saraswati puja (11th February' 2027)

GMBHCA / Sponsorship Welcome

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From the Desk of the General Secretary



Dear Devotees, Members, and Friends,

On behalf of the Executive Committee, it is my privilege to welcome you all to our annual celebration and present the introduction to our **Annual Report for the year 2025 – 2026.**

As a registered charity, the **Greater Manchester Bengali Hindu Cultural Association** remains steadfastly committed to keeping our rich heritage vibrant while serving our local community. Over the past 12 months, our calendar has been filled with spiritual devotion, vibrant traditions, and a strong sense of togetherness.

We successfully brought our community together through our core religious celebrations: **Durga Puja, Lakshmi Puja, Kali Puja, and Saraswati Puja.** Beyond these sacred rituals, we expanded our community engagement through our deeply moving **Mahalaya programme, engaging cultural functions, and our highly anticipated annual picnic.** Each of these events, along with other year – round activities, will be detailed individually in the following sections of this report.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend **a special note of gratitude to our Chairman, Prof Sandip Mitra** for his exceptional leadership, tireless efforts in securing major donations, and unwavering support throughout the last year were absolutely pivotal to the grand success of our puja.

An endeavour of this scale is a collective effort, and my heartfelt thanks also go out to our dedicated volunteers, our generous donors, corporate sponsors, and fellow committee members who worked tirelessly behind the scenes all year round.

Overview of the year's activities and community engagement and achievements: -

The GMBHCA organised a picnic on 19th July last year that brought members together for a day out on a coach to Devil's Bridge Waterfalls in Wales. Everyone enjoyed the short walks down to the three historic bridges. After this, the group had lunch at the Forest Visitor Centre, the forest trails made a relaxed afternoon surrounded by Mid Wales scenery. The journey to and from the picnic was full of excellent entertainments led by Joydeep and joined in with gusto by everyone, keeping the mood lively all day. The picnic was planned and executed by Joydeep Mookerjee, Sutapa Mookerjee and Debopam Mukherjee. Thank you so much!

Durga Puja preparations:- Preparation for puja started straight after the picnic. Mahalaya was observed, on Sunday, 21st September last year. Devotional songs, Chandipath and dances were performed by our community members. Garba dances were performed too afterwards. Thanks to all the participants.

We had an extra day of puja and all the 6 days of puja was planned, organised and executed well by the puja preparation subcommittee. Mr Shankar and Mrs Iti Bhattacharjee performed the puja with much devotion. The young priest, Dev Banerjee, who is only 18 not just helped but showed his utmost devotion while performing some parts of the puja. Thank you Dev from the bottom of our hearts for having such sincerity from this young age. We are proud of you.

Bhog prosad, on all puja days morning and evening was cooked and brought in by our ladies. Our lady members also donated new sarees for the deities. Jayati strung the beautiful garlands for all the deities. Ananya Banerjee strung the garlands for the puja ghots. Bidisha and Moushumi took the overall responsibilities for organising the main puja along with Modhumita, Debika, Ankhi, Satabdi, Debolina and some others. Thanks to the whole team for their hard work and punctuality. Akhondo Chandi path was done on Mahashtami day by Mr Gurudas Biswas. He has been kindly doing it for many years now with extreme sincerity and devotion. Thank you dada from all of us.

One of the devotees donated 108 large red carnation flowers for performing Sandhi puja on the morning of 30th September'25. Kumari Puja, a unique Hindu Durga Puja ritual was done on the evening of Mahanabami. Every year a young girl is chosen from the community, who represent Goddess Durga's pure form and is worshipped.

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Decoration and hall management:-The decorating group lead by Joydeep planned and decorated the stage before all pujas. Many ideas were discussed and then agreed on the best possible work which would be quick to accomplish and not be too onerous to complete. Abhishek Bhol, Anupam Ghosh, Alok Bhattacharjee, Debopam Mukherjee, Gourav Sarkar, Joydeep Mookerjee, Sourav Dey, Parag Dutta, Pratap Dutta, Rabi Chowdhury, Sabyasachi Dutta, Samik Banerjee, Sanjay Adhikary, Souvik Pal, Subir Majhi helped with the overall ideas by taking part in decoration and implementation. There was a lot of input from Ahana Dey, Adwitee Roy Choudhury, Bhavna Ghosh, Satabdi Majhi Bannerjee and Sutapa Mookerjee. A huge thank you to the whole team. Clearing up of the stage decorations and packing away in respective boxes was done by the team very smoothly at the end of each puja.

A fully decorated marquee with light, heat and all the comfort were set up in the Gandhi Hall car park. Thanks to Debasree Mitra for making the arrangements of the marquee. The entertainments in the marquee were a big attraction, members were happy and relaxed in there and enjoyed the warmth of the atmosphere. The Event management team, consisting of many of our devoted members, led by Joydeep made sure that the movement between the main hall and marquee was smooth. The number of people inside the hall never exceeded health and safety targets. Our heartfelt thanks to Jeffri, Ahana, Alok, Ranajoy, Anupam, Abhishek B. Bhavna, Bivan Saha, Debasree, Debika, Debopam, Parag, Pranab, Pratap, Sanchari, Sanjay, Sharmila S, Shuma, Somnath, Sourav, Sumi, Sutapa, Tannistha for making it successful.

Maa Durga boron by ladies followed by Sindoor Utsav was very well organised and was enjoyed thoroughly. Special Bengali style meal with shukto and posto was prepared by Chumki, Soma, Debasree and helped by others.

Entertainments on all days of puja including Dhunuchi dance were well planned and excellent.

The security guard was appointed for the evenings of pujas to make sure the number of attendees does not exceed the limit. The presence of our DSOs was very useful.

Kitchen team:- Thanks to the Kitchen team led by Soma, Chumki and Debasree and helped by Ankhi, Satabdi, Bhavana, Sanchari, Debolina, Krishnakali, Falguni, Moushami, Subir, Moumita and team. Our sincere thanks to Krishnakanta, Soma and her team who were in the kitchen preparing delicious prosad for all the visitors. We had some other chefs too who prepared prasad on other puja days. Bin management was good, thanks to IRCT for their help in arranging large bins for all the days. A big thank you to Alok, Abhishek and the team for taking up the responsibilities of shopping multiple items. Thanks to the Gandhi Hall caretaker who was on time in opening and closing the Gandhi Hall door for us.

The cleaning of the hall, kitchen and the dining area was done by 3 different cleaners meticulously.

Organisational improvements and new initiatives: - A new automated receipts system was built which helped in generating all receipts at Gandhi Hall using a QR code and sent to email of the donors. This was integrated with Gift Aid questioner which provides an opportunity for GMBHCA to claim 25% of the donation amount as Gift Aid returns in addition to the donation paid by members. The system was introduced by Abhishek Bhol, Subrata Pal and Arijit Bhowmick. Thank you.

Thanks to Abhishek Bhol and Arunava Ghosh for introducing a renewed social media and promotion strategy for GMBHCA which included an updated website, frequent posts on GMBHCA Facebook Page and a new Instagram Page.

Advertising and circulation of puja programmes was done well. News of puja activities on different media was circulated. Various posters and teasers were created by Abhishek to advertise our puja. The photos, videos and puja programme were uploaded by Arunava Ghosh. Thank you.

Puja Brochure:- A beautiful Puja brochure was produced with all the necessary information by Subrata Pal. Many thanks to Subrata for compiling the information to create the attractive magazine.

Donation team:- Money collection team worked extremely hard during the puja days to collect membership and donation money so the puja activities keep going smoothly. Many thanks to Subrata, Sandip, Chandrangshu, Mr Biswas, Shantanu Das, Tapas and many others who helped with this.

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Community engagements:- Bharat Swachh Divas was observed on Bijoya Dashami day in Gandhi Hall and outside in the car park jointly by people from CGI and GMBHCA members.

We were deeply honoured to host Consul General of India Manchester Mrs Vishakha Yaduvanshi and several distinguished guests at our Durga Puja festivities. Their presence underscored the cultural significance of the event and strengthened our ties with the wider community and diplomatic corps.

Acknowledgements:- Appreciation certificates along with gift cards were presented to our young members for their contribution for GMBHCA. They were Aryan Saha, Deb Banerjee and Tanisha Dasgupta. Each subgroup member received well – deserved recognition during the presentation to the audience.

It was a lovely sight to see the whole community working together in harmony.

A huge thank you to Moushumi Sengupta for providing a resting place for our priests in between morning and evening puja in her place.

A big thank you to Debika, Sutapa, Anushree and Ahana for selling the puja saris in Gandhi hall for the puja fund.

Most of the puja days were sponsored by our members and the names have been published in our Puja brochure. Advertisements were given by many and have been acknowledged again in our annual magazine.

Lakshmi Puja, Kalipuja and Saraswati Puja:- Kojagori Lakshmi puja was on Monday, 6th October'25 and was done in a homely atmosphere. Sri Sri Kali Puja was performed on

Monday 20 th October last year meticulously by Shankar, Iti and helped by Deb. Along with main puja, Chandi path, Balidaan and Homa was done.

Saraswati Puja was on 23rd January this year. Gandhi Hall Shashtri ji performed the puja with much devotion and explained to all why the puja is celebrated. The puja started on time at 6 pm. Shashtriji invited the children (students) on the stage after the puja was over to say a few words of advice and to give Ma Saraswati ji's blessings. A beautiful musical piece was played on violin by a child student. The Gandhi Hall was full of devotees including students from the University. The food prepared by Prachi Jain was delicious. Thanks to Joydeep and team for an attractive decoration of the stage, Alok for making food arrangements, our ladies for puja preparations and Subrata for being on the welcome desk welcoming and collecting donation and everyone else for working hard in front of and behind the scene. All devotees had prasad and cleaning and clearing of Gandhi Hall was finished by 10 pm.

GMBHCA volunteers were honoured to be invited by "Our Lady Roman Catholic School" on 6 March 2026 to introduce students to Hindu culture and the festival of Holi. It was a wonderful experience to share the stories, values and traditions behind the festival with around 400 students, followed by an engaging dance workshop where students enthusiastically joined in and experienced a small part of the celebration. Thanks to Abhishek Bhol, Saroni Basu, Rup Ghosh Roy and Sayoni Halder.

Governance Update: Marking 34 years of operation, the organisation has modernised its constitution, which was originally approved by the Charity Commission three decades ago. The newly drafted document will be presented for formal ratification. Special thanks go to Sourav Dey and the working group for delivering this project alongside their busy professional commitments.

On the cultural front :- We celebrated **Bijoya Sammilani** on 2nd October'26 …..had a variety programme consisting of songs, dances, recitation, shruti natak and Bollywood dhamaka by our own talented community members. Many thanks to Satyaki, Tuneer, Sabyasachi and Aniruddha for performing an engrossing shruti natak for the first time in Gandhi hall. Thanks to Dr Soumit, Sheena Datta and Aishwarja Basu for spellbinding recitations, Dr Bidisha, Sreyasi and Dr Madhuja for their graceful dance performances and Soma Ghosh & Shilajit Ghosh for their enthralling shruti natak. On Bollywood dhamaka Falguni, Debosree, Ahana, Joydeep, Sharmila, Chumki and Somnath made an incredible impression on our audience.

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Nababarsho: A variety cultural programme was organised by our Entertainment Secretaries and was held in Hale Barns community centre. The programme started with an anti -war song, very emotionally sung by Sharmila Sen with Ipsit on guitar. There were disha and her daughter Saina, Moumita and Suparna, Tanisha and group and Saheli. Chorus as well as solo Bengali soulful songs were sung by child artist Kittu followed by Ananya and group, Krishnakali, Anindyo & Ipsit on guitar, Falguni and the evening was brought to a close by some entertaining songs sung by Joydeep. The whole programme was very enjoyable. Soma kept the whole audience connected by her unique style of presenting the items. The snacks and dinner food stalls were arranged by Pallabi. A successful conclusion to the year's activities!

Closing Statements:- In closing, we thank every donor, sponsor, volunteer, and well – wisher whose faith makes GMBHCA's work possible. Your trust inspires us to serve with greater devotion, transparency, and unity. With Maa's blessings, we remain committed to deepening our community impact in the year ahead.

GMBHCA bows in gratitude to all devotees and donors whose generosity sustains our seva. We sincerely thank our dedicated volunteers and committee members for their selfless service and dedication throughout the year. Our heartfelt appreciation to the Consul General and distinguished guests for gracing our puja, and to Gandhi Hall management for their continued support and to every member who joined our celebrations and community initiatives. Your presence and contributions give strength to our mission.

May the divine blessings of the deities bring peace, good health, and immense joy to you and your families.

Warm festive regards,

Dr Bharati Kar
General Secretary, The Greater Manchester Bengali Hindu Cultural Association

WITH BEST WISHES FOR HAPPY DURGA PUJA FROM

ARPITA SHAH OF BINPIN TRAVEL AGENCY

For best price on Air tickets - please contact

Arpita Shah on +44 (0) 79562 00871 / 020 8357 6726

or binpintravel@hotmail.com



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From Sankar Da & Family
Iti, Soumyajeet, Monideepa, Goutam
& Sankar Bhattacharjee



!!শুভ শারদীয় শুভেচ্ছা!!

As we gather once again to welcome Ma Durga, we are reminded of the simplest and most beautiful meaning of Durga Puja: **Ma is coming home.** For generations, this has been at the heart of our celebrations, a celebration of faith, home, family, and belonging.

আজ থেকে প্রায় ১৫ বছর আগে শুরু হয়েছিল আমাদের যাত্রা—মা দুর্গার পুজো করার অভিজ্ঞতা অর্জন করা। প্রবাসে পুজোর অভিজ্ঞতা আলাদা। কোথায় সেই শরতের পেঁজা তুলোর মতো মেঘ, কোথায় সেই শিউলি ফুলের গন্ধ আর সারাদিন ঢাকের আওয়াজ! যান্ত্রিক এই ব্যস্ত জীবনে কখনও মনে হয়েছে, মা কি আদৌ আসবেন? আমরা কি পারব তাঁকে সঠিকভাবে জাগিয়ে তুলতে? কিন্তু আজও যখন প্রবাসের সেই মণ্ডপে মায়ের পুজোয় বসি, চোখ আনন্দে ভিজে ওঠে। আশ্বিন মাসে আজও বুকের ভেতর সেই চেনা ঢাকের আওয়াজ শুনতে পাই। সুখে-দুঃখে তোমাদের সহযোগিতায় বহু বছর কেটে গেল। তোমরা পাশে না থাকলে এই দীর্ঘ পথ চলা সম্ভব হতো না। তোমাদের সকলের মঙ্গল হোক।

বিদেশে পুজো করার অভিজ্ঞতা এক অদ্ভুত অনুভূতি। এখানে দেশের মতো গঙ্গার ঘাট নেই যে চট করে গিয়ে ঘট ভরে আনব, নেই দশকর্মার চেনা দোকান যেখানে বললেই ১০৮টি পদ্ম পাওয়া যাবে। কিন্তু তারপরও দেখি, তোমাদের সম্মিলিত প্রচেষ্টায় সবকিছুরই বিকল্প ব্যবস্থা হয়ে যায়। আসলে ভক্তি থাকলে মা সব রূপেই পুজো গ্রহণ করেন। দুর্গাপুজো শুধু উৎসব নয়, আমাদের অন্তরের চেতনাকে জাগ্রত করার এক মহোৎসব।

দেবী দুর্গা যেভাবে মহিষাসুরকে বধ করে পৃথিবীতে শান্তি প্রতিষ্ঠা করেছিলেন, ঠিক সেভাবেই আমাদের ভেতরে লুকিয়ে থাকা কাম, ক্রোধ, লোভ, অহংকার ও হিংসার মতো আসুরিক প্রবৃত্তিগুলোকে মায়ের চরণে সমর্পণ করে আমরা শুদ্ধ হই। মা দুর্গা হলেন আদ্যাশক্তি। সমাজ ও পরিবারে নারীশক্তিকে সম্মান করা, তাঁদের মর্যাদা ও নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিত করাই মায়ের প্রকৃত আরাধনা।

কত ব্যস্ততার মাঝেও তোমরা যেভাবে সব কাজ ফেলে মায়ের সেবায় এগিয়ে আসো, শাড়ি, গহনা ও পাঞ্জাবিতে সজ্জিত হয়ে মণ্ডপে ছুটে আসো, তা দেখে হৃদয় ভরে ওঠে। ছোট ছোট ছেলে-মেয়েরা, যারা হয়তো বাংলাটা পুরোপুরি বলতে পারে না, তারাও যখন আধো আধো উচ্চারণে মায়ের মন্ত্র আওড়ায়, তখন মনে হয় প্রবাসে থেকেও আমরা আমাদের শিকড়কে দৃঢ়ভাবে ধরে রেখেছি।

কুমারী পুজোয় যেসব ছোট্ট মেয়েদের পায়ে মাথা নত করেছি, তারা আজ কত বড় হয়ে গেছে! সিন্দুর খেলার পর বা দশমীর শান্তিজলে যখন বিদায়ের ক্ষণ আসে, তখন মনে হয় সাত সমুদ্র তেরো নদীর ওপারের এই ছোট্ট মণ্ডপটাই আমাদের আসল ঘর, আর তোমরাই আমাদের পরম আত্মীয়।

বহু বছর একসঙ্গে পথ চলতে চলতে আমরা কবে যে এক পরিবার হয়ে গেছি, তা টের পাইনি। শরীর ক্লান্ত হলেও মণ্ডপে এসে মায়ের মৃন্ময়ী রূপের দিকে তাকালেই সব ক্লান্তি দূর হয়ে যায়। চন্দনের গন্ধ আর ধূপের ধোঁয়ার মধ্যে খুঁজে পাই চেনা বাংলার মাটিকে।

এসো আমরা হিংসা, অহংকার ও ভেদাভেদ ভুলে ঐক্যবদ্ধ হই। মায়ের চরণে প্রার্থনা জানাই, তাঁর আশীর্বাদে সবার জীবন সুখ, শান্তি, সুস্বাস্থ্য ও সমৃদ্ধিতে ভরে উঠুক। অশুভ দূর হোক, শুভ শক্তির জয় হোক, আর আমাদের এই ঐক্য ও সংস্কৃতি প্রজন্মের পর প্রজন্ম বেঁচে থাকুক।

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আমরা অঙ্গীকার করি, আগামী প্রজন্মের মধ্যে হিংসা নয়, সহযোগিতা; অবিশ্বাস নয়, ভালোবাসা ও পারস্পরিক শ্রদ্ধার বন্ধন গড়ে তুলব।

যদি অনিচ্ছাকৃতভাবে কোনো ভুলত্রুটি হয়ে থাকে বা কাউকে কষ্ট দিয়ে থাকি, তবে মা যেন নিজগুণে ক্ষমা করেন।

আমাদের পরিবারের তরফ থেকে শারদীয় দুর্গোৎসবের প্রীতি, শুভেচ্ছা ও আন্তরিক অভিনন্দন জানাই। এই পবিত্র লগ্নে তোমাদের সবার জন্য রইল আমাদের আন্তরিক ভালোবাসা। মায়ের আশীর্বাদে সকলের কল্যাণ হোক।

To the Divine Mother, the source of all auspiciousness and the refuge of all beings, we offer our humble salutations. May Ma Durga bless you and your families with happiness, health, peace, strength, and prosperity. May our community continue to grow not only in numbers, but also in kindness, compassion, and togetherness. May future generations inherit not only our traditions, but also the deep sense of belonging we have built together.

সব শেষে এসো আমরা আকুল হয়ে মায়ের কাছে প্রার্থনা জানাই —

"আমাদের একটু জায়গা দাও গো মাগো, তোমার মন্দির গড়ি।"

THE EVER CHANGING EARTH



By Oishani Ghosh (age 9)

Stampeding dinos shook the mountains,
Raging fire set the world to flames,
Majestic birds swooped at jet speed,
The fragile water crystals failed to put out the fires.

Mini creatures yelped for help,
Smoky ash blinded out the glistening sun,
The Aurora Borealis still sparkled in the night sky,
And meandering streams spat bubbles of water.

Startling snowballs terrorized the helpless animals,
Frightened creatures hid faster than a cheetah,
Crumbling coal poured from above,
Booming volcanoes erupted as chaos grew.

Colliding comets exploded into smithereens,
Sparking fireworks of nature flew into the air,
All of the wildlife ran and scurried,
The world of flames was destroying Earth.

And then, slowly the crystals of water, put it all out,
It was the end for the fire and its reign,
After 20 million years, seas filled in,
The animals crept out of their hiding spots.

— XXX—

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With best wishes for Happy Durga Puja and Happy Deepawali from Puffwala



Please use code "PUFF26" to get 10% discount on purchases till 30th November 2026!

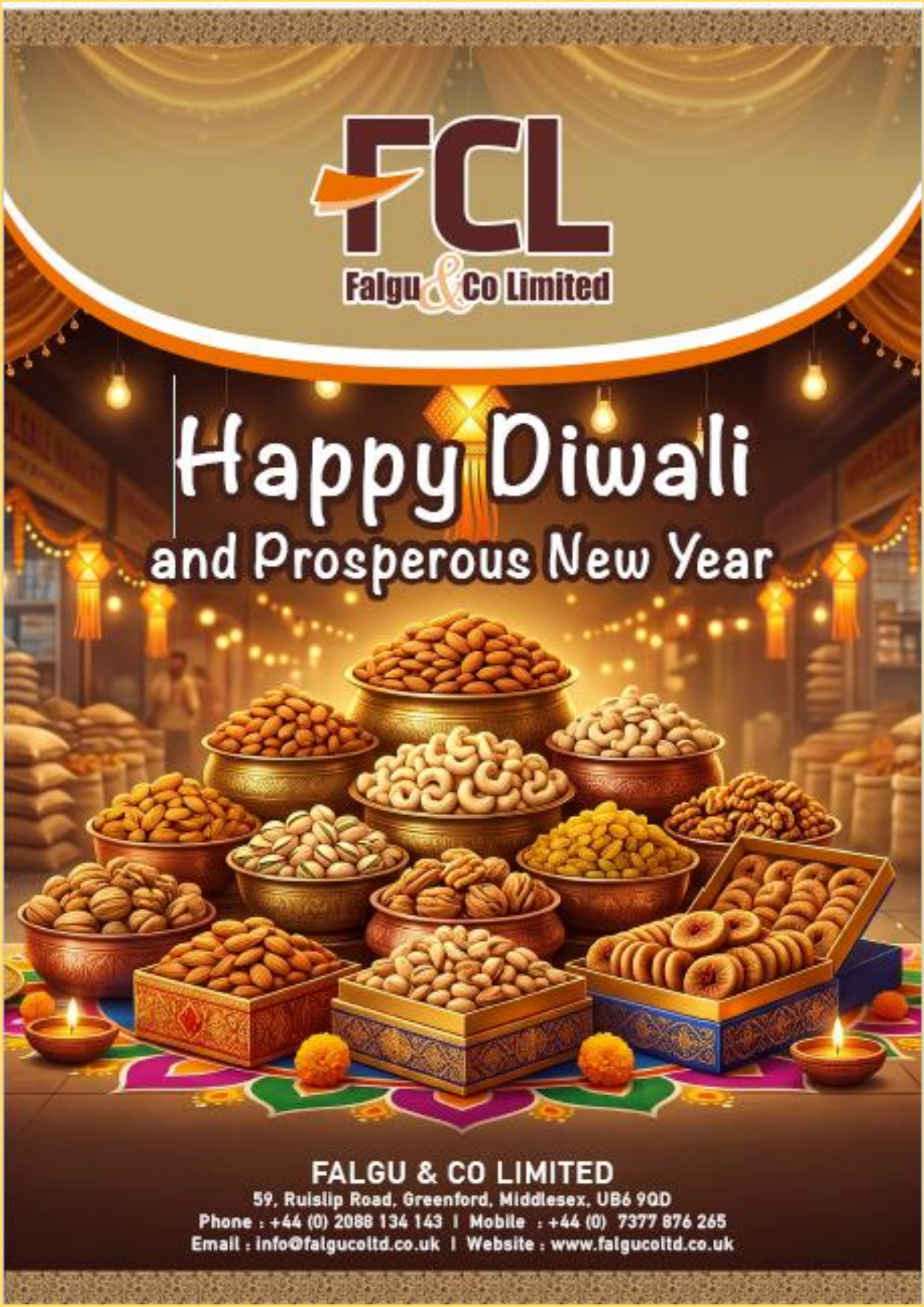
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With best wishes for happy Durga Puja and Happy Deepawali from ASM Supermarket



ASM Supermarket
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Ashton-under-Lyne
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ADI AGAWEKAR
University Student

Grand Hall, Whitworth Art Gallery
Manchester - M15 6ER

Sunday - 06-Dec-2026
01:00 PM to 05:00 PM

contact@manchesterdurgapuja.co.uk

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MESSAGE FROM BROCHURE SECRETARY

শুভ শারদীয়া! সকলকে জানাই আন্তরিক প্রীতি, শুভেচ্ছা ও অভিনন্দন।

Shubho Sharadiya! Sending my warmest greetings and heartfelt wishes to everyone for a joyful festive season!

As we gather once again to welcome Maa Durga, I extend my warmest and most heartfelt welcome to our members, devotees, sponsors, friends, and well-wishers. For over three decades, GMBHCA has been more than just an association, it has been our shared home where faith, culture, and community come together to create memories we cherish for a lifetime.

An event of this scale is truly a labor of love. It only happens because of the tireless dedication of our volunteers, the incredible generosity of our sponsors, and the constant support of our members. To everyone who pours their time, effort, and resources into this throughout the year, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. We humbly seek your kind cooperation in following the guidance of our volunteers, so that every ritual and cultural program flows as beautifully as the *dhaak's* rhythm on Shashthi morning.

As our community grows beautifully year after year, so do the expenses of keeping our traditions alive at this scale. While your regular membership is the bedrock of GMBHCA, I gently appeal to those who are able, to consider making a voluntary donation. No contribution is too small; every bit helps us sustain our charitable work and pass on our rich heritage to the next generation.

My sincere gratitude goes out to all the writers, advertisers, and contributors who poured their hearts into making this year's brochure a reality. A special, respectful thank you to Bharati Di (Kar) Sandip Da (Mitra) and Alok Da (Bhattacharjee) - your constant guidance, wisdom, and encouragement mean the world to me.

May Maa Durga bless you and your families with good health, abundance, peace, and boundless joy.

Shubho Sharadiya! **শুভ দুর্গোৎসব।**

Subrata Pal
Brochure Secretary On behalf of GMBHCA

Two Poems by Partho Chawdhari -- পার্থ চৌধুরীর দুটি কবিতা

Reflective দুইটি!

উভয়ে যদিও বাস করে থাকে ঘেঁষাঘেঁষি,
ভুঁড়ি আর অহং-এর রীতিমত রেষারেষি,
পেট বলে, 'আমি বড়',
ইগো কয়, 'সরে পড়ো,
হেরে গেলে নিন্দুকে দেয় দুয়ো শেষাশেষি'!

মেদ কহে, 'দেহ জুড়ে সুস্থতা কাড়িলাম',
অহং বলিল, 'দেখ, সীমাহীন বাড়িলাম,
বাকিদের উচ্চতা,
মনে করি তুচ্ছতা,
আকাশকুসুম কত অনায়াসে পাড়িলাম'!

দুই-রকম:

চিকিৎসাতে চরক-ঋষি কি সুশ্রুত-ও,
আছেন হয়ে সু-পঠিত, বহুশ্রুত,
তেমনই মার্গসঙ্গীতে,
থাকেন ছেয়ে চারিভিতে,
আমির ভালনাম-টি, তিনি শ্রীখুসরু তো!

বন্ধুবর্গে এক ব্যাপারে সদা-ই ঐক্য,
মদের ব্যবস্থায় থাকে না মতানৈক্য,
শীতল? ঘরের তাপমাত্রায়?
পৃথক ফল না এক যাত্রায়,
নেশা ছাড়াও গভীর সখ্যে মাতা-ই লক্ষ্য!

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The Greater Manchester
Bengali Hindu Cultural Association
(GMBHCA)

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Pencil sketch By Dr Bidisha Ghosh



It is very encouraging that more and more GMBHCA members are coming forward and helping in our Puja and other program activities. The following subcommittees are created this year: -

GMBHCA SUB-GROUPS AND LEADS - 2026 – 2027

1. PUJA PREPARATION GROUP — Bidisha Ghosh & Moushami Chatterjee

2. KITCHEN MANAGEMENT GROUP — Ushashi Coomer, Soma Ghosh & Debasree Mitra

3. SHOPPING MANAGERS — Alok Bhattacharjee & Abhishek Bhol

4. DECORATION & HALL / EVENT MANAGEMENT — Joydeep Mookerjee & Sourav Dey

5. CULTURAL GROUP — Soma, Moumita & Ankhi

6. FUND RAISING GROUP — Sandip Mitra & Somnath Coomer

7. FEEDBACK & RELATIONSHIP BUILDING — Mousumi Sengupta & Shuma Pal

The members who have already joined and working on the above subcommittees are doing some fantastic work – please keep it up! Anyone who would like to join any of the above subcommittees is very welcome to do so; please contact the GMBHCA desk for further information.

GMBHCA Membership – Be Part of the Community

Why Join?

- Celebrate Traditions: Be part of Mahalaya, Durga Puja, Lakshmi Puja, Kali Puja, Saraswati Puja, and more – continuing over 30 years of Adi Manchester Puja tradition.
- Enjoy Cultural Programs: Attend and participate in all cultural events and functions.
- Complimentary Preeti-Bhoj: Free evening Preeti-Bhoj for members and their families on all Puja days (non-members: chargeable per person).
- Stay Connected: Access to an exclusive Members' WhatsApp group for updates and announcements.
- Have a Voice: Voting rights and eligibility to join the Executive Committee (EC).
- Stay Informed: Receive bi-annual emails with AGM invitations and Puja updates.
- Get Involved: Volunteer and contribute to decision-making through sub-groups.
- Special Excursions: Enjoy an annual trip organized especially for members.
- Build Community: Make lasting friendships, support youth initiatives and charity, and feel proud to belong to GMBHCA.

Please join or renew your membership as soon as possible to support our community events and enjoy these exclusive benefits!

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Manchester's Little Bengal

Where Bengal is not remembered — it is lived

Written and compiled by Prof. Sandip Mitra & Abhishek Bhol

Greater Manchester Bengali Hindu Cultural Association · Established 1993 · Registered Charity No. 1068094

You hear it before you see it. The dhak — that ancient Bengali drum, rolls across a Manchester autumn evening and you know, before you have opened the door, that something remarkable is happening inside. And then you step in, and Goddess Durga meets your gaze. Ten-armed, resplendent, triumphant: standing not in Kolkata but in the heart of Northern England, garlanded in marigolds, surrounded by three hundred families who have carried their culture three thousand miles and refused, year after year, to set it down.

> **"For those visiting for the first time, it is a festival. For generations of Bengali families in Manchester, it is a homecoming."**

Thirty-Three Years of Belonging

Founded in 1993 by a small group of families who believed that community is something you build, not something you wait to be given, the Greater Manchester Bengali Hindu Cultural Association — GMBHCA — has grown into one of Northern England's most cherished diaspora organisations. What began as a gathering around a shared table of khichuri has become something extraordinary: more than 300 member families, thousands of annual visitors, a year-round cultural calendar, national media coverage, and a community so deeply rooted in Manchester that Bengal doesn't feel like a memory. It feels like home.

1993	10+	60K
Established	Events each year	Social media views

Manchester is now one of Britain's great international cities. GMBHCA did not simply arrive in this landscape. Over three decades of dedication and love, it helped shape it. It established Manchester as a recognised centre of Bengali Hindu culture outside India — a fact that Republic Bangla, Zee News, Asian Voice, and media platforms on two continents have now reported to the world.

Durga Puja: The Soul of the Celebration

To call Durga Puja simply a festival is to miss the point entirely. It is four days in which Manchester becomes unmistakably, unapologetically Bengali. Children rehearse dance performances for weeks. Grandparents swap stories over steaming khichuri prepared by volunteers who have been up since dawn. Families drive from London, Edinburgh, Cardiff — from across the UK — to be together in a way that feels, improbably and precisely, like Kolkata.

The 2025 Durga Puja brought a moment that captured everything GMBHCA stands for. A young man named Deb — believed to be Britain's youngest Hindu priest — celebrated his 18th birthday not at a party with friends, but performing the sacred puja rituals before Ma Durga herself. Wearing a festive '18' badge, surrounded by the warmth of the GMBHCA family, he chose a birthday that meant something. That is not obligation. That is love.

> **"Love that carries a tradition forward through generations."**

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The Volunteers: The Heartbeat of Every Event

Behind every festival, every prayer, every plate of khichuri, is the invisible army that makes it all possible: the volunteers. GMBHCA runs almost entirely on the freely-given time, skill and love of its members. Doctors, engineers, teachers and entrepreneurs swap their weekday roles for ladles, brooms and microphones. No one is above any task. Everyone is part of the whole.

More Than a Festival: A Year-Round Community

GMBHCA's heart beats not just in October, but through every season of the year. Poila Boishakh rings in the Bengali New Year with colour and music. Lakshmi Puja and Kali Puja light the winter months. Saraswati Puja brings blessings for students and scholars. Bijoya Sammilani gathers the community after the puja season with sweet exchanges and warm embraces. And then there are the events that have become legends in their own right.

The Annual Family Picnic is, frankly, unmissable. A full coach of families, children packed with energy, elders beaming, stepping-stones across rivers, picnic rugs spread across the English countryside, and the kind of easy laughter that only comes from decades of friendship. It is a day when Bengal meets the Peak District, and somehow both feel entirely at home.

Cricket for Charity: Sport with a Heart

If there is one event that captures the full, joyful energy of the Manchester Bengali community, it is Cricket for Charity. Fiercely contested, warmly inclusive, and deeply purposeful, this annual match brings together players of all ages for a cause greater than the scoreboard. The cricket might be competitive — but the smiles at the end of the day are for everyone.

Serving Manchester : Promoting Values

On Dashami 2025, as the Durga Puja celebrations drew to their sacred close, GMBHCA members stepped outside in their finest kurtas and sarees - and picked up brooms. In collaboration with the Consulate General of India, Manchester, the association organised a Swachh Bharat initiative, reinforcing that service and civic pride are not separate from celebration. They are woven into the same cloth.

This is GMBHCA at its most profound: a community that does not retreat into its own celebrations but extends its values outward. To local schoolchildren learning about Holi. To the wider Manchester community invited to share in Durga Puja. To the nation, through a commitment to civic responsibility that would make any city proud.

iKaku: Bengal Meets the Digital Age

At the centre of GMBHCA's remarkable digital story is **iKaku** — the association's warmly adored mascot and perhaps the most charming ambassador of Bengali culture in the North of England. Whether he is hoarding KitKats before a Poila Boishakh baithak or returning from the moon just in time for Nababarsher celebrations, iKaku has a gift for making tradition feel utterly joyful and completely current.

The numbers tell their own story. GMBHCA's social media platforms now generate nearly 60,000 views — close to 460% year-on-year growth — with almost half of all engagement driven by Reels. iKaku is at the heart of this. He is proof that tradition and modernity are not opposites, if you have the creativity to hold them both.

60K	460%	~50%
Social media views	Year-on-year growth	Engagement via Reels

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The Next Generation Chooses Bengal

The most important thing GMBHCA has built cannot be measured in attendance figures or social media metrics. It is visible in the young people who choose to be here — not because they are brought by their parents, but because they have decided, for themselves, that this matters.

They are the performers on the Durga Puja stage who have rehearsed for months. The volunteers who stay until midnight breaking down the pandal. The young priests like Deb who turn their 18th birthday into an act of devotion. The digital creators who keep iKaku alive and adored. The future committee members who will one day run these events and quietly prepare for another year.

> **"A community dedicated to carrying our heritage forward: GMBHCA's deepest achievement."**

Bengal in the Heart of Manchester

When the final aarti ends and the Durga idol begins her symbolic journey home, the festival closes. The community does not. It gathers again in spring, on cricket fields, in classrooms, around charity drives and cultural evenings, across a year of belonging that no single event can contain.

Thirty-three years on from gathering of families who wanted to stay connected to something they loved, GMBHCA has built a living institution where culture is celebrated without apology, where community service is its own reward, where young people discover their heritage and choose it, and where every generation finds its own way to carry the spirit of Bengal forward. Manchester has its Little Bengal. A Bengal as any GMBHCA member will tell you with a warm smile and absolute certainty could not be more at home.

Perhaps the best way to bring this story to a close is through the moments themselves. In the pages that follow, our year-round photo collection offers a glimpse into the celebrations, activities, friendships and shared experiences that make GMBHCA what it is today.

MEMORABLE MOMENTS FROM OUR 2025 & 2026 PUJAS AND PROGRAMMES







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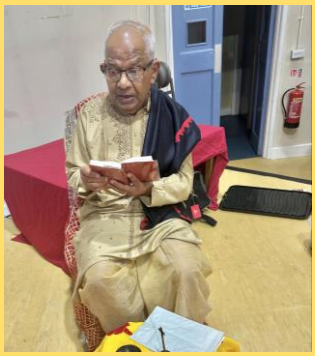




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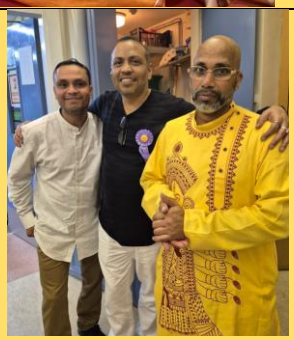













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The Greater Manchester Bengali Hindu Cultural Association – Durgotsav 2026



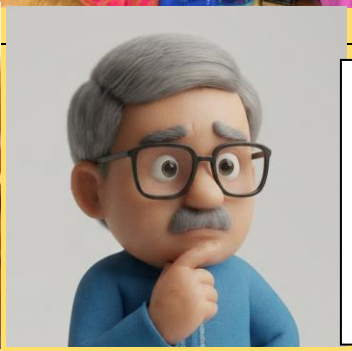






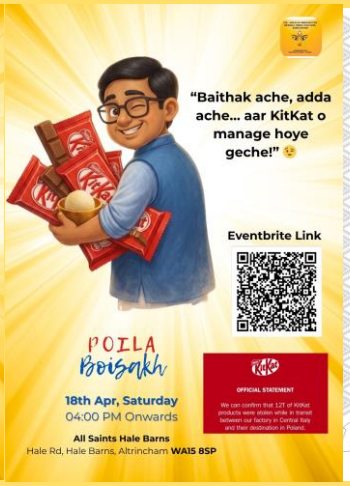






Need help? Ask iKaku, our digital representative, available 24/7.







There are many more, but we run out of space, apologies 😊

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